REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections.

STATUS OF CLAIMS AND SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENTS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-26 will be pending in this application. Applicants have amended claims 1, 6-9, and 14-20 to further clarify that the memory recall key is pressed by a user, and direct response to this pressing, a memory recall signal is generated. Support for these amendments can be found, inter alia, in the specification at paragraph [0060]. Claim 1 has also been amended to clarify that the memory recall key is pressed for re-execution of an output instruction. Support for this amendment can be found, inter alia, in the specification at paragraph [0005]. Because the amendments place the application into condition for allowance, or into better form for appeal, without raising new issues requiring further consideration or search, entry is appropriate under 37 C.F.R. § 116(b), and such is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

In paragraph 2, page 3 of the Office action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Ainai (U.S. 5,663,800), in view of Nishiyama et al. (U.S. 6,067,168). In response thereto, the claims have been amended to clarify the distinctions between the claims and the cited prior art.

The Examiner states:

> Nishiyama teaches that the processed image data is
> returned to the requesting machine (copier 91) upon receiving a

"return request" signal by the machine performing the image processing (see Fig. 1 (S54), Fig. 15 (S14, S15, S16, S10) and Col. 17, lines 42-48). Nishiyama further teaches a user can input control data through a user interface from the requesting machine (copier 91) to send image processing and control information to specific machines (copier 92 and copier 93) that are [in] communication with the requesting machine (see Fig. 13b, Fig. 13c and Col. 16, Line 4-18). This shows that the input keys from the user interface screen could generate the return request signal for returning the processed image data to the requesting machine.

Office action dated June 17, 2008 at pages 2-3 (emphasis added).

The portion of Nishiyama cited by the Examiner describes a system where at digital copying machine 91, an operator inputs a desired highlighting level in sharpness using a sharpness input key. See Nishiyama at column 15, lines 56-67. Then, the digital copying machine 91 determines to which digital copying machine is should issue a job request to process the document data, and sends to that machine function control data along with scrambled image data. See Nishiyama at column 15, line 67 to column 16, line 7. The receiving machines receive the data, unscramble it, and process it according to the sharpness function requested. See Nishiyama at column 16, lines 39-45. When processing is completed, the image data is returned:

> Neither of the digital copying machines 92 and 93 returns the processed image data to the digital copying machine 91 as soon as they end the job. They withhold the processed image data until the digital copying machine 91 empties its own memory 73, in other words, until the digital copying machine 91 issues a return request for the processed image data (S10).
>
> This is because, as previously mentioned, the digital copying machine 91 does not have a memory of a sufficient capacity to store the processed image data if they are returned immediately.
>
> Upon receipt of the return request from the digital copying machine 91 in S10, the digital copying machines 92 and 93 scramble the processed image data and return the same to the digital copying

machine 91 in a direction reverse to the previous inbound transmission (S11).

Nishiyama at column 16, lines 46-61.

However, the Nishiyama key relied upon by the Examiner is not a memory recall key that can be used to directly recall data from one device to another. The memory recall key enables re-execution of an output instruction. See paragraphs [0005] and [0007] of the original specification.

To the contrary, since the Nishiyama digital copying machine 91 only generates the return request when its memory has been cleared, the presence of such a memory recall key would be unnecessary. Since there is no disclosure or suggestion of a memory recall key that, in direct response to being pressed by a user, generates a memory recall signal, Applicants submit that even if Nishiyama was combined with Ainai in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the claimed invention would not be obtained.

The Examiner goes on to state:

> In another embodiment, Nishiyama teaches that an individual machine can process the image data and return the processed image data upon receiving a "return request" signal (see Fig. 26 (106) and Col. 32, Line 5-13). Nishiyama also teaches that an operator at [t]he digital copying machine 92 and 93 can control the copying machine to perform image processing and send the processed image data to another selected machine (see Fig. 11 (91, 92, 93), Fig. 14 and Col. 17, Line 5-32). It can be seen that the operator at the remote copying machines 92 and 93 is capable of sending the image data back to the original machine 91, upon receiving a return request from the copying machine 91. This would enable the user at the remote copying machine to take control of the copying machine to perform specific image processing, and then send the image data back to the original machine 91 when the image data is processed and ready. Therefore in the examiner's opinion, Nishiyama suggests "using a key that generates a signal in direct response to operation by a user after a transfer of the image data received by the input device

to the image memory of the memory-incorporating apparatus
connected to the input device via the network.

Office action dated June 17, 2008 at pages 2-3 (emphasis added).

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's analysis is incorrect.

Nishiyama states:

In addition, the digital copying machine directs the operator to
decide whether he also wishes to use any other eligible digital
copying machine within the system by displaying a corresponding
message on the liquid crystal display device 1 (S14).

A good example of the above would be a case where the operator,
manipulating the digital copying machine 92, wishes to use the
sharpness function by using the data processing portions 71 of both
the digital copying machines 92 and 93.

Suppose again that the operator wishes to take the advantages of
the present image forming system, in other words, he wishes to
process the image data using the digital copying machine 93 as
well (S15). Then, the digital copying machine 92 proceeds to S7,
and selects any other eligible digital copying machine (herein
machine 93) besides the self, and sends a part of the image data to
the digital copying machine 93 thus selected, so that the digital
copying machine 93 proceeds to S8 and beyond. At the same time,
the digital copying machine 92 carries out the sharpness function
on the rest of the image data. Note that the digital copying machine
92 may request the digital copying machine 93 to process all the
image data on its behalf.

On the other hand, if the operator wishes to process the image data
using the digital copying machine 92 alone, the digital copying
machine 92 carries out the sharpness function on the image data
(S16), and proceeds to S13 to output the processed image data.

Nishiyama at column 17, lines 5-32. Nowhere does this portion of Nishiyama

disclose or suggest that the user can control the issuance of a return request, much

less disclose or suggest the existence of a memory recall key that will directly issue

such a request when pressed by the user. Moreover, none of the Figures of

Nishiyama illustrate such a key.

Again, even if the disclosure of Nishiyama was combined with that of Ainai as the Examiner suggests, the invention recited in claims 1, 9, 17, 18, 19, and 20 would not be obtained. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, and that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Moreover, the rejections of the dependent claims should be withdrawn at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent claims.
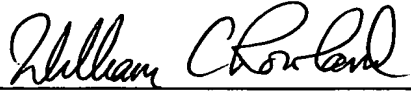
For the reasons stated above, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance and such is requested.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this response, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: October 7, 2008   By: _William C. Rowland_____
                                 William C. Rowland
                                 Registration No. 30888

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620